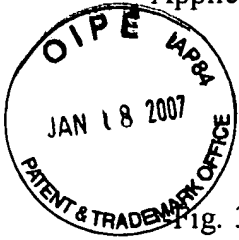


AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please amend the specification as described below. A clean copy of the amended paragraph is enclosed with this reply.

Please amend the following paragraph beginning on page 37 as follows:

--Fig. [[31]] 32 is a flowchart for explaining the processing of the object number issuance unit 254. As shown in Fig. 31, the object number issuance unit 254 stands by until it receives command data relating to the issuance request of object numbers from the host device 2 (STEP 3 101). Upon receiving the command data, the object number issuance unit 254 issues a prescribed number of object numbers with the upper limit being the number which it can simultaneously manage (STEP 3102), and outputs this to the host device 2 (STEP 3103). The object number issuance unit 254 judges whether the requested number of object numbers has been issued (STEP 3104), and when the judgment is no, it stands by until the object numbers are released (STEP 3105). The object number issuance unit 254 proceeds to STEP 3102 after the object numbers are released in order to issue new object numbers for those which have been released. In other words, for example, if it is possible to simultaneously manage 20 object numbers and it receives an issuance request for 30 object numbers from the host device 2, the object number issuance unit 254 issues 20 object numbers and replies to the host device 2. Thereafter, with respect to the remaining 10 object numbers, the object numbers issuance unit 254 issues a new object number for each release of an issued object number and replies to the host device 2.--



CLEAN COPY OF AMENDED PARAGRAPH

Fig. 32 is a flowchart for explaining the processing of the object number issuance unit 254. As shown in Fig. 31, the object number issuance unit 254 stands by until it receives command data relating to the issuance request of object numbers from the host device 2 (STEP 3101). Upon receiving the command data, the object number issuance unit 254 issues a prescribed number of object numbers with the upper limit being the number which it can simultaneously manage (STEP 3102), and outputs this to the host device 2 (STEP 3103). The object number issuance unit 254 judges whether the requested number of object numbers has been issued (STEP 3104), and when the judgment is no, it stands by until the object numbers are released (STEP 3105). The object number issuance unit 254 proceeds to STEP 3102 after the object numbers are released in order to issue new object numbers for those which have been released. In other words, for example, if it is possible to simultaneously manage 20 object numbers and it receives an issuance request for 30 object numbers from the host device 2, the object number issuance unit 254 issues 20 object numbers and replies to the host device 2. Thereafter, with respect to the remaining 10 object numbers, the object numbers issuance unit 254 issues a new object number for each release of an issued object number and replies to the host device 2.--